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ABSTRACT

The link between education and work and the situation at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs are discussed by the university chancellor in testimony to the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Characteristics of this urban, commuter university and its students are described, along with historical changes in the role of the University of Colorado. The university serves both the traditional-aged college student and employed adults, as well as retired persons, homemakers, and military personnel. It is suggested that currently, higher education is urban-centered, meeting local needs, solving regional problems, and providing lifelong educational opportunities. Changing characteristics of the Colorado Springs area are also described, along with the university's efforts to be responsive to community needs. These responses include class scheduling for 6 days a week and offering new degree programs, including computer science, chemistry, physics, and anthropology. There have been increasing demands for engineering and business courses with the growth of electronic and microprocessor companies. While responding to these educational demands, the university continues to emphasize a broad range of liberal arts, science, and professional programs. (SW)

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REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION
"EDUCATION FOR A PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY"
September 16, 1982 - Denver, Colorado

BY DR. DONALD SCHWARTZ, CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT COLORADO SPRINGS

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Thank you very much...and good afternoon.

I am Donald Schwartz, Chancellor of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, one of the three general campuses of the University of Colorado system. The University of Colorado was established in 1876 by the State Constitution. In 1972, voters approved an ammendment to the Constitution that established the University of Colorado campuses at Colorado Springs and Denver as state institutions of higher education under the Regents of the University of Colorado. The University of Colorado system also includes the Health Sciences Center in Denver. The HSC is comprised of Colorado General Hospital, the Colorado Psychiatric Hospital, the School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the School of Dentistry, and a variety of affiliated institutions and centers.

I am the Colorado state representative for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, a national group that includes over 350 four year colleges and universities. And it is in this dual capacity, as Chancellor and as the AASCU representative that I address you this afternoon.

The scope of AASCU can be more fully appreciated when you realize that in the 1979-80 school year, member colleges and universities throughout the country granted 67 percent of baccalaureate degrees, 63 percent of master's degrees, and 63 percent of all doctoral degrees awarded in 25 different fields of major study.

In Colorado, AASCU universities and colleges include the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs; the University of Colorado at Denver; the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley; the University of Southern Colorado, Pueblo; Adams State College, Alamosa; Fort Lewis College, Durango; Mesa College, Grand Junction; Metro State College, Denver; and Western State College, Gunnison.

Of those, only the University of Northern Colorado and the University of Colorado at Denver grant doctoral degrees. Master's degrees are available at the two University of Colorado campuses, the University of Southern Colorado, and Adams State. The rest of the AASCU institutions are limited to baccalaureate programs.

Three of the nine AASCU institutions in Colorado are commuter campuses, having no housing for students on the campus. This doesn't mean, however, that students at those campuses, ours in Colorado Springs, the University of Colorado at Denver, and Metro State at Denver, include only residents of their immediate environs.

At the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, we have, in fact, students from nearby cities and towns. They have obtained housing in the Pikes Peak area where they reside while attending classes at our campus. From eight to twelve percent of our enrollment has traditionally come from out of state.

HE016 813

I will confine my observations and comments on the role of Postsecondary Education in Preparing Students for Work to my own campus, where I have been Chancellor since 1978.

For the sake of this discussion as to the role UCCS has played in fulfilling its role of meeting the educational requirements of the area's residents, I believe it is important to give you some brief background on the growth and development of our University.

The University of Colorado began offering courses in Colorado Springs in 1925 through its Extension division. Courses that were primarily aimed at the more mature student, interested in acquiring new skills or sharpening old ones.

The Colorado Springs Extension Center was founded in 1955 in one room in the then only high school in the area. The Center grew as demand for classes increased, and in 1964 the Cragmor Foundation, then operators of a turbeculosis sanatorium, gave its assets to the University. The grounds and buildings became the locale for the Colorado Springs Center in 1965.

Earlier the University's Board of Regents approved the granting of resident credit for degree courses offered at the Colorado Springs Extension Center, and in the same year the University acquired the Cragmor property, jurisdiction of the Center was moved from the Extension division of the University to the appropriate schools and colleges of the University. These were the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, the then School and later College of Business and Administration, and the College of Engineering and Applied Science.

As we go about our business of responding to the educational needs of our students, we do so on a campus that now includes more than 400 acres, and have seven colleges and schools offering courses. In addition to the ones I mentioned earlier, we also have the Graduate School of Business Administration, the Graduate School of Public Affairs, and the Graduate School.

We offer undergraduate and graduate programs; bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, master of arts, master of science, master of business administration and master of public administration.

The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs today represents to me an example of a university in the right place at the right time.

UCCS is an urban university, serving its commuting students of all ages with their wide variety of interests and needs.

When the University of Colorado began its operations more than 100 years ago, the enabling legislation said:

"...the objects of the University of Colorado shall be to provide the best and most efficient means of imparting to young men and women, in equal terms, a liberal education and thorough knowledge of the different branches of literature, the arts and sciences, with their varied applications."

The "objects" of more than 100 years ago are still the same at all the campuses of the University of Colorado.

But there is one major difference. No longer is the educational process directed only to "young men and women, in equal terms."

Rather today, higher education throughout the University of Colorado system, particularly at its urban campuses in Colorado Springs and Denver, is available to students of all ages, from those in their teens up to and including students in their 50s, 60s, and, in some instances, in their 70s.

To give you some idea of the student mix at UCCS, let me share with you some statistics on our student body, which was 53 percent female and 47 percent male last year.

Our student body encompasses far more than just the recent high school graduate. We serve the adult who has been at work and the student, who for one reason or another, never had the chance to pursue higher education. We serve the student whose professional skills need sharpening, or who is seeking a second, and, in some instances, a third career. Another group using UCCS is those retired persons who wish to continue active participation in the community. There are others - the housewife whose higher educational opportunities were limited by the duties in the home, and the military person, who is seeking additional skills and education.

Less than 20 percent of our students were under 20 years of age. Twenty-three percent were from age 21 to 29; and 33 percent of our students were in the 30 to 49 year old age bracket. Nearly three percent of our students were 50 years of age and older. Average age of our student is 28.5.

So you can see that our student body mix is a far cry from what one usually associates with a typical residential college or university campus. And I am sure that the figures I cite for UCCS would be matched at the other urban non-residential campuses in Colorado.

This change in a universitys' clientele, so that learning is more a life-long experience, is a development that, to my mind, marks the beginning of what I refer to as the fourth era in higher education in this country.

The first era, from 1636 to about 1861, saw higher education reserved exclusively for the wealthy and sons of ministers. It was elitist, classically oriented, and designed for aristocracy.

From 1861 to about 1941, prior to World War II, the era of development of state universities and land grant colleges, saw enrollments grow and professional competence expand. But the clientele was still somewhat limited. Only one out eight high school graduates went on to higher education at the close of that era.

Today it's closer to one of every two high school graduates, who continue into college and university work. Impetus for this dramatic increase and the inception of higher education's third era came, of course, from the GI Bill at the end of World War II.

Launching of Sputnik in 1957 propelled higher education in this country to unparalleled heights of support. And further impetus for expansion came with the social progress of the '60s and '70s when enrollment of minorities was expanded. Black studies were introduced, and problems, such as equal access and affirmative action, were tackled.

Now, we are in the fourth era of higher education, the era of the urban university, meeting local needs, solving regional problems, and providing lifelong educational opportunities to our clientele.

As an urban university in the Pikes Peak area, UCCS responds to the requirements of her clientele.

Classes are scheduled six days a week, and held during the day and the evening. This provides maximum flexibility to students in planning their educational and employment activities.

Of the more than 5,000 students enrolled last fall in our programs, approximately 75 percent were employed. It is estimated that 60 percent of that group were employed fulltime.

About 35 percent of our students attend classes only in the evening, from five o'clock to nearly 11 o'clock.

As some of you probably know, Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak area form one of the fastest growing sections in the United States. Thrity years years ago when the university still was offering extension courses, population of El Paso County and Colorado Springs was about 75,000. Today that figure surpasses 330,000, and the area continues to attract more and more people.

The growth in population has triggered dramatic changes in the character and personality of the area, changes that have and will continue to affect the university in its efforts to fill its role in preparing postsecondary students for work.

Once dependent primarily on the tourist industry, Colorado Springs underwent a major change in the '40s and '50s with the addition of sizeable military installations. The presence of these army and air force bases and their complements of troops and dependents brought much pressure to accelerate the development of educational programs at the local level. This military impact continues to grow today. Earlier this month we were in attendance as the Air Force activated its USAF Space Command here in Colorado Springs. This is the forerunner of the establishment in the area of another military installation.

Colorado Springs is also in the midst of another major alteration to the character of the community, a change whose impact is just beginning to be felt, but which will continue to affect the area through the '80s and beyond.

A major influx of electronic and microprocessor companies coupled with the expansion of similarly oriented businesses already located here, provide Colorado Springs with an industrial base it never had before.

As the character of the community changes because of the advent of these companies, UCCS is faced with increasing demands for courses in the areas of engineering and business. These damands undoubtedly will continue to grow as more and more companies in the electronic fields and allied industries focus on the Pikes Peak area as the location for new or expanded operations.

We will respond to those demands and needs within the limits of the resources available to us. But I want to emphasize that we do not intend to become a technological college or a business school.

The mission and goals statement of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs as a comprehensive master's granting university as set forth by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education reads:

"At the baccalaureate level, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs shall continue to emphasize a broad range of liberal arts and sciences and its approved professional programs in education, engineering and business. Existing master's level progams shall be continued. Additional master's level programs may develop as the need for such programs in the service area is demonstrated."

In accordance with that mission and goal and in response to community needs, the University has added in recent years a number of new degree programs... computer science, physics, chemistry, and anthropology.

During the past year, our campus dedicated a new microelectronics laboratory for the College of Engineering and Applied Science. Development of this facility, valued at approximately $1 million, was a major step in the upgrading of our engineering curriculum and was made possible by major equipment gifts from local industry to augment funding provided by the State of Colorado. This laboratory is one of a handful of such facilities in the country and provides undergraduate and graduate engineering students with unprecedented learning opportunities in the growing microelectronics field.

Today we are in the process of developing other new programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level in response to burgeoning demands of a growing student body.

For example, the ability to read and write computer is quickly becoming one of the mainstays of a college education.

Computer Literacy for all students is one of the goals for UCCS. In fact, I can see the day coming when such a program in Computer Literacy might become a requirement for an undergraduate degree just as much as English composition.

In fact, as was reported last Spring in the Chronicle of Higher Education, there already are several institutions where "Computer Literacy" is now required for graduation.

Stephen White, Director of Special Projects for the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, said that the idea that all students "should be acquainted with the computer in some reasonably respectable fashion is surely no more radical a thought than the proposition that they should be able to read and write."

I agree with that comment and hasten to add that a requirement for Computer Literacy certainly should not be confined to only those in the business or engineering areas. Computers are a fact of life today and will become more dominant in everyday functions.

As Mr. White said: "The computer is one of the most powerful tools that has ever been brought into being for the service of the individual who seeks to understand his world and the way it wags."

But, let me repeat, UCCS is not now and will not in the future become so heavily oriented to business and engineering that its appointed role as a university, in every sense of that word, is diminished or lost.

UCCS does indeed offer the world of learning, the world of education, the world of scholarship. That's what a university is about, and that's what UCCS will continue to be about in preparing its students and graduates for the world of work.

I will be happy to respond to any questions, and I want to thank you for this opportunity to appear before you.